



Interview with Kelly- Founder of Be A Fun Mum Blog

by Emily | Sep 12, 2016 | Inspiring Interviews | 4 comments



I am so excited to have Kelly here from Be A Fun Mum. Her blog is a delightful resource for mums and has such creative, informative and practical wisdom and ideas on how to venture forth as a Mum equipped to make your days a little more fun and yourself a little more loving. I hope as you read her answers, you will be as encouraged to press on as I have been.

1. Hi Kelly. It is lovely to have you here on Pursuits of God. Can you tell readers a little about yourself?

It's a challenge to boil yourself down into a snapshot! Here we go: I tend to live at both ends of the spectrum: wearing high heel shoes one day and hiking boots the next; sipping tea out of a pretty cup and slurping hot coffee from a camping mug; challenging myself physically and stopping for long quiet unhurried moments to be still. My husband Matthew is two days older than myself, and is a calming steady influence on sometimes erratic me. His training to become a surgeon has meant a lot of moves and years of training. Together we have been blessed with four wonderful children who are currently aged between 9 and 15 years old. I enjoy reading, period dramas, travel, good licorice, witty conversation and coffee. And I have never lost my adoration for Cookie Monster.

2. How would you describe your relationship with God?

I fall far short in my daily faith: in a nutshell. Ha! Thankfully, God is bigger than my weakness. I am constantly humbled by God's love, grace and patience with very imperfect me. There's a constant drawing to God in my spirit, and this leaves me with a yearning to both know Him more, and serve Him. It's a response. So my relationship with God is underpinned by the incredible drawing of His love demonstrated to me through the gift of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit in my life. It's a constant pull, and then comes the striving.

3. What are some ways that you pursue a relationship with God?

One thing my husband and I feel strongly about is regular commitment to attend church. To be frank, there are plenty of times we just don't feel like going. Family life gets busy and we

find it's easy to become complacent. There is no such thing as a perfect church because there's no such thing as perfect people. However, we prioritise regular attendance at church: to sit under teaching of those who have studied the ancient text and explain cultural contexts; to encourage others and be encouraged; to be part of a community; to be diligent.

Everyday life as a Christian for me means aligning my life by Jesus' example; studying the Bible, listening to warriors of the faith; praying and hopefully (in God's strength) displaying the qualities love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control in my life (Galatians 5:22-23). The goal isn't to be "good" or to achieve some kind of reward, but as a response. Love is action. It has to be. My default is to serve my own selfishness and pride, but those paths have never brought me deep peace or joy.

4. How does your relationship with God affect other relationships in your life?

I was thinking about how to answer this question, because the simple answer is I hope to encourage, edify, and bless people in my life. That is what I strive for, but perhaps the outworking of this needs to be asked of those whom I have a relationship with. Instead, I want to share a story about an area of my life that has been transformed. I'm more of a type A personality with perfectionist tendencies: I am driven, sensitive, and competitive (with myself). I always strived to be kind, and my parents always said I was a peacemaker in our family. However, underneath that exterior of apparent kindness, was a very judgmental heart of others, and even an arrogance. Through some tough times in my 20's, God broke down that judgmental bent, so much so I am now completely the opposite. I have become an advocate of extending compassion, and grace to others. Compassion flows so freely now, no

judgment, and when I look back on my former self, it's like it's a different person. God has given me a gift of compassion and it's my joy to extend that to others. I would say that is one of the biggest ways my relationship with God affects other relationships in my life.

5. What or who have been key influences in your journey with God so far?

Most notably my mum who died from cancer 10 years ago now. She lived faith with a combination of simplicity and strong conviction. Another key influence in my life is the heritage provided by my grandmother, who still invests in my life today. She is the sort of person you can tell anything to without fear of judgment. There's a deep wisdom and balance to her influence, and her knowledge of the Bible is amazing. When it comes to faith in action, my dad is a man of vision who is a passionate doer and has travelled many areas in the world to help others in need. This has grounded and inspired me from a young age. Right now, I would say my three sisters have a strong influence as they walk beside me. We have banded around each other as we seek to mother our ones without our own mother's influence. I lost my mum when I was 26 years old with three very young children in my care, and my sisters were, and are a beautiful encouragement to me.

Outside of my close personal influences, I appreciate listening to Ravi Zacharias' podcasts and the way he tackles big issues at the intersection of faith and logic. There's a lot of questions about the role of Christianity in the modern world: religion, faith, suffering, culture, injustice – there are lots of big, big questions. I have questions too! It's prudent for me to seek truth in wisdom and I continually strive to do this. I appreciate Ravi's passion for truth and his way of thinking has influenced the way I approach my spiritual life.

5. As a mother, how do you make time for God a priority and reality in your life and why do you think this is important?

When you have small children around, it can be hard to find dedicated time to be still. Over the years I've found ways to make God a priority and I'll list them below:

1. **Look for prayer moments:** There are usually some repetitive aspects to parenting, and I look for those moments I can use for prayer. For example, most days I wait for about 5-10 minutes for my children to meet me after school and I often will use the quiet moment for prayer. Don't underestimate the value of sentence prayers or having a prayerful attitude throughout the day too. It's a beautiful way to stay aligned.
2. **Join a small group:** Over the years it's been lovely to spend time with other women in a small group situation.
3. **Stay accountable:** I made a commitment to read my Bible and pray every day. I have to say the quality of my Bible reading and prayer life isn't always that great, but I do keep to that commitment to continue to make it a priority. Even if that means reading a few verses at a time.
4. **Make time for church:** Obviously, it's not always possible to attend church with sick children and a host of other factors, however I strive to make it a priority; to set aside that time to encourage others and be encouraged.
5. **Gratefulness:** I make it a priority to adopt a grateful spirit by recognising all the good-good things that sometimes can go unnoticed. Nature around; the satisfaction of working hard; relationship.
6. **Live out faith in parenting:** My faith has been absolutely vital when it comes to parenting my children. The more I learn about God's character, the more I can see an incredible parenting model. God's patience, grace, goodness and refinement in my own life influence

my own parenting more than anything else. I guess this answers the last part of that question in why I make God a priority: His way has given me the tools to live in truth and love. I aim to love my children with such a deep giving love so they too, can know the drawing love that transforms. My role isn't to convert my children. That is not my aim. My aim (although I admit the application is often flawed) is to show them the love I have experienced in all its wonder.

6. What advice would you give to women, in allowing God's Word and his Spirit to shape and define their purpose and focus for life?

Sometimes looking for a focus or purpose can be a stumbling block. I have often heard (and said myself), "But I don't know which door to take! What does God want me to do?"

Sometimes we can get stuck standing in front of a series of doors, looking at them wondering which is "the one". I come back to this: I already know what God wants me to do. I adore this verse from Micah 6:8: "And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." To act justly. To love (LOVE) mercy. To walk humbly with God. Whatever you do, live your life aligned with Christ, and hold on to the promises. It can be easy to get stuck on staring at doors when the answer is already there. Sure, I know people who have experienced a clear path, but I haven't...except knowledge and faith of the path already set for me.

Let me share one of these door moments with you. A little history first: We have had over 10 major moves in our family. That means 8 school moves for my eldest child. Or is it 9? Last year we were in New Zealand, and when my husband got a permanent job back in Australia (after completing extensive training), it felt like a new world opened for me.

To actually settle in an area!

To find a community!

That my precious children could stay in school and establish friendships and focus on education!

That I could establish a network for myself!

My excitement was followed quickly with fear. I froze. You see, all of a sudden, picking the “right” area and “right” school for my children became something very real. It’s not something I had ever had before. Ever since our marriage, going on 17 years ago, we have had the expectation of moving ahead of us. The longest we were in any place at a time was 4 years, and mostly, we moved each year. The weight of the decision hit me and I didn’t know what to do.

Someone said to me, “It’s okay, if you don’t like the area or school, you can just move the children.” I felt my heart cry out! My resilient yet needy children have endured so many school changes, I didn’t want to make a mistake on where to send them and having to move them out again. I wanted to do it right! As a mother, the wellbeing of your children is such a heavy weight. My mind whirled.

I didn’t know what area to settle in.

Do I opt for a private or public school?

Big school; small school?

Different schools for the children with different needs?

I just didn't know! But I needed to know! I needed not to make a mistake! It surprised me how this decision tore me up. After doing all the practical things you might think of like researching areas and schools in a particularly vicinity (close to my husband's work place), talking to friends and prayer...my husband and I still weren't sure. I felt like the success of my children's further education and happiness was pinned on making the right decision. I remember admitting this to my Aunty, and she said to me, "Kelly, God knows your heart. He knows you are striving for the best for your kids."

It hit me then. You see? I focused so much on the different doors that I forgot to remember the real heart of the matter. I guess that is where faith comes in. I still didn't feel that strong sense of a path in this instance, but I shifted my focus away from the different doors, and more on doing what is right in faith. Do what is right. What was right in this moment was for me to have my children's best interest at heart...to be motivated out of my love for them. Like so many times before (oh why don't I learn?), it was when I let go of control — let go in faith, while doing right — things fell into place. I drove forward to the unknown, and 8 months now after our move, I feel so blessed in the area and school we have settled in. There's a deep sense of peace here.

I think there are many moments like these in life for parents. Do I go back to work? Do I stop work? What career should I pursue? What does God want me to do? What school should my children attend? What's my purpose? There seems to be so many doors and sometimes (I may argue much of the time) you might not get the arrow pointing to which one. Shift the focus away from the options, rest in God's truth, and do what is right.

7. You are the editor and creator of the blog “Be a Fun Mum,” how did this blog start and what is your vision for it?

When my children were young, I suffered from depression and terrible anxiety attacks. They were dark times. It took me a while to realise the extent of the depression on my life, but when I eventually got some help and came out from under the cloud, I realised how long I had been under. During those months of a clear head, I wanted to...no, I was hungry to adopt changes. I set up Be A Fun Mum as a goal for myself because I wanted to find more ways to be fun with my kids. I never had the intention for it to become what it is today.

My children are getting older now, and my purpose for the blog has changed from a personal goal to have a dual purpose: firstly to help other mothers embrace their beauty as they parent their kids and give them confidence to do that rather than focusing on what others are doing; and secondly, to provide the opportunity for other mothers to write for me. I now have a team of 4 and we all enjoy contributing to BAFM together.

8. As women, we are bombarded with things that consume our time. Whether we work, raise children, serve others (and the list goes on), it is sometimes hard to work out how to juggle everything. How do you manage this?

I think what helps me manage is to start with recognising and replacing some of the unhelpful assumptions that exist about this “juggling act”. If you look at, say the Proverbs 31

woman, and all the amazing empowered things she does, it's not really about what she does, but her character.

She is strong,
and giving,
and driven,
and wise,
and humble,
and loving,
and loved.

It's a bit like the door situation where we can focus on all the hats, and the juggling we have to do rather than qualities that exude in **whatever we do**. For me this has given me a freedom away from managing different roles and instead being who I am in the Lord and how that extends to anything I do, whether that be parenting my ones, being a wife to my husband or capitalising on the driven person I am.

The other thing that has helped me is moving away from the idea as a mother that I have to be everything to everyone. I tend to be a people pleaser, and it took me a while to learn to do

what is right, not necessarily what is expected. The tricky part sometimes is the wisdom to know which is which.



9. As a reader of your blog, I have found your creative ideas and insights into motherhood really practical and helpful. Are there any creative ways you bring God into your home and family life?

Most significantly, I love God's wonderful nature and I adore the season changes. I look for ways to enjoy and celebrate each season by bringing items into the house, so this might be making daisy chains in spring, displaying shells in summer, hanging rainbow leaves along the window in autumn, and painting sticks in winter. God has given us so many good things to enjoy.

10. Finally, you enjoy adventures and creating memories for your family- what has been your favourite so far and do you have anything planned for this year?

Oh, I do love adventure! One of my favourite family experiences so far was a mini getaway down to the snow in the North Island with the children while we were living in New Zealand last year. My husband and I sometimes think it's crazy to do a long weekend trip with four kids because it really is A LOT of work to make it happen. But it's always so worth it! We stayed at a farm outside Mt Ruapehu and the kids had a ball playing with lambs and running

in the open spaces. It was about a 30-minute trip to the soft snow from our little farm-stay house and our snow visits were brilliant fun. Snowman making, snow fights, tobogganing, chair lift ride and eating hot chips.

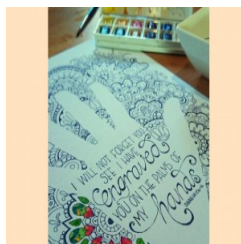
This year, apart from our annual family holidays (this time it will be up in the Sunshine Coast hinterland), we are starting to also travel with our kids one on one or a few at a time. While my husband and I prioritise family time when we are all together, as the kids get older we are able to achieve other travel plans like coupling overseas work trip with an experience for one of the children. They will all get their turn. This year hopefully one of my daughters will travel with me to Japan, and next year, my husband is planning to head to Hong Kong with another one of our daughters. Travelling as a family of six can be expensive so it's not something we can do readily. However our children are at the perfect age to travel and we look for opportunities to invest in them in this way.



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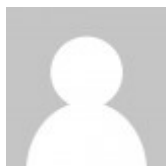


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4 Comments



Annette on November 6, 2016 at 6:55 pm

I'm struggling to bring more influence of God in my life. Sure I go to church and pray sometimes but I need more. I struggle with health issues and the focus is often getting through the day.

Reply



Emily on November 6, 2016 at 9:22 pm

Hi Annette. Lovely to hear from you. I am sorry to hear of your health issues and the struggle in the day-to-day. I have struggled too with a desire to bring more influence of God in my life. I did an interview recently with Clare Smith and have been pondering her frank statement, "I have breakfast every morning and so over breakfast I read my Bible." I have admired the way she was certain her day needed to start with God's word in the same way we need to eat- I wonder sometimes if I have this same conviction or this discipline. Breakfast often feels a bit chaotic in our home but I recognise there are two things at play in this- I know I could do more the night before to make it easier; I also know that I am in a season of busyness with little kids that will change. But if I wait until these changes come, will I miss the joy of discovering more of God? God is gracious and his word is true, all I need to do is open it! I love listening to music as well

that reflects God's word. Some friends find the She Reads Truth app helpful on their phone, others enjoy reading plans, still others enjoy progressively working through a book in the Bible. What works for you? Thanks again for sharing, it is something I have been working through at the moment too and so it is very timely. I will be praying for you that you would find ways to pursue God in your day-to-day, but also that you would find comfort, hope and strength in the truth that God first pursued us and continues to do so.

[Reply](#)

Clare on November 13, 2016 at 9:30 pm

It's so nice to read about Kelly and hear about her faith as I have known about her Blog for a while. Being a Christian Blogger in Brisbane myself too, it is inspiring 😊

[Reply](#)

Emily on November 13, 2016 at 9:43 pm

Hi Clare. Lovely to "meet" you. I have been inspired by Kelly's blog too and hearing how her relationship with Jesus impacts her life and mothering was really encouraging. Let me know your blog- I'd love to check it out 😊 Emily

X

[Reply](#)



01. WELCOME



Hello and welcome to Pursuits of God! I'm Emily and it is wonderful to share life here with you. Come in, grab a cuppa, take some time to read, reflect and be encouraged as we share the journey of pursuing our great and gracious God together!

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